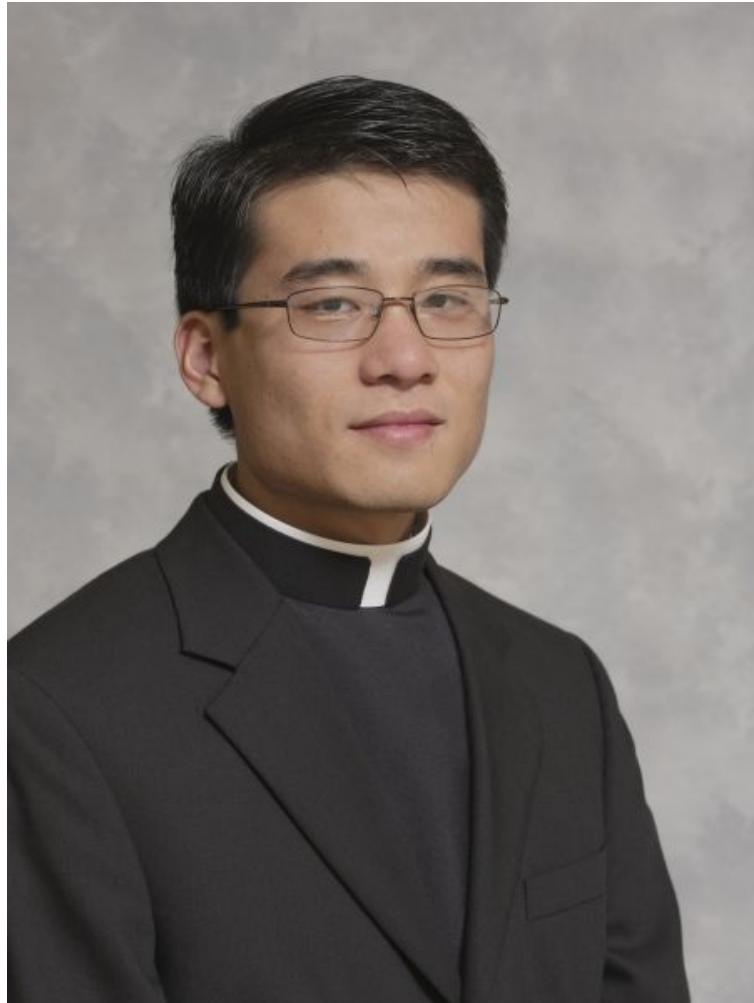


Metro

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/victim-advocates-plan-to-defy-court-order-in-lawsuit-filed/article_54fc80c2-7092-5b44-9aab-429be9456ce2.html

Victim advocates plan to defy court order in lawsuit filed by once-accused St. Louis priest

By Joel Currier St. Louis Post-Dispatch Jul 21, 2016



Rev. Xiu Hui "Joseph" Jiang

ST. LOUIS • An advocate for victims of clergy sexual abuse said Thursday that his group likely will defy a St. Louis federal judge's order to hand over personal information about people who made accusations against a Roman Catholic priest.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests has until Friday to provide communications sought in a civil suit by the Rev. Xiu Hui "Joseph" Jiang, who had been named in two counties on charges that were later dropped. Jiang is seeking damages.

"In good conscience, we feel we have absolutely no choice. We can't comply," said David Clohessy, director of the St. Louis-based SNAP. "It literally sickens me to think that one abuse victim who is agoraphobic or depressed or anorexic or even suicidal is going to be betrayed again when she finds out that a twice-accused child-molesting cleric gets to read painful, intimate details of her suffering."

U.S. District Judge Carol E. Jackson ordered production of documents that include emails, text messages and contact information for the accusers.

Jiang filed suit last year claiming he was defamed with false accusations rooted in religious and ethnic discrimination, and denied due process. The defendants are an accuser's parents, listed only by initials, two St. Louis police officers, the city, SNAP, Clohessy and another SNAP official, Barbara Dorris.

In a court filing in May, Jiang's lawyers said they were looking for evidence to support their belief that the priest was the target of a conspiracy.

Jackson ordered SNAP to provide emails and texts sent among the accusers, SNAP officials and Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce, as well as all records of donations SNAP's lawyers made to the organization.

The order says federal law does not guarantee privacy in the production of pre-trial evidence, although the judge did side with some of SNAP's objections to turning over internal emails among the survivors' group's officials.

Jiang's lawyer, John Sauer, declined comment Thursday. He referred to a July 12 court filing in which he called SNAP's refusal to disclose the requested records "yet another frivolous attempt to evade their clear obligations under federal rules."

"More than five months have passed since (Jiang) served his discovery requests on the SNAP defendants," Sauer wrote in that filing. "Enough is enough."

Clohessy and Dorris called Jackson's ruling "unprecedented" and "troubling," and said Thursday that SNAP is unlikely to comply, despite the risk of penalties.

"When victims are afraid that their privacy will be violated, they stay silent," Clohessy said in an interview outside the headquarters of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Jiang's goal, Clohessy claimed, "is to keep victims and witnesses and whistleblowers silent, scaring them from calling police, prosecutors, therapists and us."

SNAP officials said they never had contact with Jiang's accusers before his arrest, and already have provided redacted documents to Jiang's lawyers.

Jiang was accused of molesting a boy in 2011 and 2012 in a bathroom of St. Louis the King School, the elementary school at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce dropped the charges in June 2015 without explanation.

The priest previously was accused of having improper contact with a teenage girl from Lincoln County. She and her family attended the Cathedral Basilica. Charges of child endangerment and witness tampering — Jiang had been accused of leaving the family a \$20,000 check as hush money — were dismissed without comment by that county's prosecutor, Leah Askey.

Jiang's lawsuit claims the male accuser told police that his father was angered when the boy told him he might be gay. It says that provided a "powerful motive" for the boy to follow his father's suggestion that sexual abuse had led to the sexual preference.

The two city detectives named as defendants are accused of arresting Jiang before conducting a "substantial investigation" that would have revealed the true motives behind the allegations, the suit says.

It says Clohessy and Dorris engaged in a "smear campaign" through published letters, press releases and interviews with reporters.

In 2012, a Jackson County, Mo., judge ordered SNAP to turn over similar records to lawyers representing accused priests in a lawsuit there. Clohessy said Thursday that it was a different situation because the demand was more limited, and satisfied by redacted documents. That suit was later dismissed.

Clohessy said the new St. Louis order is so broad that it appears to seek all communications about anything between SNAP and its lawyers for 10 years.

MORE INFORMATION



Victims fight court order in civil suit involving once-accused St. Louis priest

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